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vacancy, it is far better to live in the light of the tragic fact, rather than to forget or deny it, and build everything on a fundamental lie."

In all this, and in Mr. Santayana's volume as a whole, there is perhaps more originality of expression and vitality of imagery than there is novelty in those points of view which can be, so to speak, isolated and defined. The fact is that the interest of the book depends almost entirely upon one thing: the author is able to poetize his sense of life, to cast a glow of something like romance—of mysterious interest, at least—even over our fundamental difficulties, our insoluble perplexities. Without being soft or unmanly, without ever writing in a purely *compensatory* or consolatory strain, without assuming any heroic postures, or pretending to reveal any secrets, he does shed upon things lights that may enable one to receive reality as interesting, beautiful, desirable. His mission appears to be to help certain minds to "accept the universe". His may be the poetry (or philosophy) of a decadent age; but it functions truly, nevertheless, as poetry (or philosophy), and of its age it is, despite its uniqueness of form and style, a singularly typical as well as eloquent expression.

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LORDS AND COMMONERS. By Sir Henry Lucy. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company.

Though *Lords and Commoners* is a book of excellent gossip well seasoned with common sense and with humor, it scarcely equals in interest Sir Henry Lucy's *Men and Measures in Parliament* republished last autumn.

Disraeli and Gladstone are important figures in the new work as in the old, and indeed, with the exception of Winston Churchill, they alone are portrayed with any fulness. But there appears to have been little to add to what the author had already said about them, and the chapter devoted to Churchill, though it does pretty well as a familiar portrait, seems in no way remarkable.

In the long run, what interests the reader—especially the rather remote American reader—in a work of this sort, is character. In *Men and Measures* Sir Henry abounded in thumbnail sketches and in brief, able analyses of personalities little and big. The result was that even one not greatly interested in the details of British politics could scarcely be contented to lay the book down before finishing it. In the present work the author runs more largely to discussions of Parliamentary oratory and Parliamentary humor—somewhat technical matters, these—to anecdotes of a slightly recondite sort, and to general comment. An entire chapter is devoted to "Bulls in the (Westminster) China Shop", of which verbal improprieties the author presents a fine list, with the zest of a connoisseur. But, after all, mixed metaphors offer no great variety of entertainment.

The final word to be said of this book of Sir Henry's is, however, that, like its predecessor, it possesses charm. It was Sir Henry who invented and fastened upon Lord Hartington (later Duke of Devonshire) the story that the

noble lord having interrupted himself by a prodigious yawn, in the midst of a speech he was making as leader of the Opposition, later explained this untoward occurrence to an inquiring lady by saying, "You don't know how dull it was!" So characteristic seemed this tale that in course of time the Duke came to believe it himself. One scarcely needs the proof afforded by this incident in order to be assured that Sir Henry rightly appraises those of whom he writes, and that his allusions convey a true atmosphere. Wit and tact and reminiscent zest are in this book, giving a flavor even to its duller facts and its more random reflections.

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TEN YEARS AT THE COURT OF ST. JAMES. By Baron von Eckardstein. Translated and Edited by Professor George Young. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company.

Doubtless, Baron von Eckardstein's book, like most diplomatic memoirs, is to be received with some caution, not because of any uncertainty as to the truth of what is related in it, but because the perspective of one engaged in the diplomatic game is not always or necessarily the truest perspective upon international relations. Von Eckardstein was a Bismarckian from the beginning, no admirer of the Kaiser, a bitter critic of Fritz von Holstein, who dominated the German foreign office during the period from 1895 to 1905 of which this book treats. We have here, then, no reluctant testimony "against interest", nothing expressive of a "change of heart", but a narration written by one who sees in the catastrophe of the World War a justification of his own views and the Nemesis of those who opposed them.

It is with no feeling of constraint, therefore, that von Eckardstein can write: "There has probably never been a national policy so laughable and so lamentable as that of the Wilhelminic Era. It was worse than perfidious, it was idiotic." It is with real zest that he can describe von Holstein as a fussy fool: "It was not before 1905 that I opposed him with all my strength in his suicidal Morocco policy, and he then contemplated having me arrested and tried for High Treason;" but there had been friction all along. There is perhaps a temptation on the part of the author—especially in view of the final disaster—to overstress just a little the ineptitudes, the indiscretions, and the sheer fatuities of the German foreign policy. It would be easy in a hasty reading of this book to attach rather too much importance to this sort of thing—to be a little too much impressed, for example, by the fact that the Kaiser once referred to his uncle King Edward, before English guests, as "an old peacock". When we read how in 1899 von Tirpitz upset the negotiations with England concerning Samoa by submitting to Wilhelm a memorandum which von Holstein called "a document of frothy flummery, sauced with bloody tears to suit the Kaiser's taste", it is not necessary to accept this somewhat splenetic outburst as an exact description. In short, it is difficult to believe that the war came in any way accidentally, through the weakness or the obstinate or hysterical